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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

23 February 2021

# Preserving Our Heritage: Grant funding obtained for Vin Smith Collection interpretation planning

The Huon Valley Council is delighted to announce that it has received a Cultural Heritage Organisations grant through Arts Tasmania to develop several interpretative displays for the Vin Smith Collection housed at the Geeveston Town Hall.

Council has also been successful in the latest round of Arts Tasmania's Roving Curator program, securing the Vin Smith Collection time with a museum professional to progress an interpretation plan for the Collection.

This is Council's second successful application to the Roving Curator program, having also secured the collection time with the Roving Curator in 2019 to attend to the management of the historical collection.

"We would like to thank the Tasmanian Government and Minister for Arts Elise Archer for providing Council with funds to preserve and showcase this unique and incredibly rare collection of antiques," Huon Valley Council Mayor Bec Enders said.

Vincent 'Vin' Smith, now deceased, was an avid collector of woodturning tools and machinery. The Vin Smith Collection, now owned by the Council, includes many fine examples of early treadle machines, pedal-operated saws, spindle moulders and scroll saws.

In the 50-year period spanning 1870 to 1920, approximately 200,000 treadle machines were made in the United States. Due to a huge number of these machines being converted to electricity, or melted down for munitions or scrap metal drives, it is estimated that fewer than 500 complete treadle machines exist in the world today.

"In 2019, the Roving Curator Grant we received through Arts Tasmania enabled us to develop a Collection Policy and start production of an inventory and catalogue of the items in the collection," Cr Enders said.

"During this process, we realised there was a need for greater interpretation and sharing of the story of Vin and his collection.

**Communications & Media Officer**

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“The Cultural Heritage Organisations grant provided through Arts Tasmania’s 2021-22 funding round will allow us to build on the work we have done so far.”

Geeveston Town Hall Company Board Chair Ian Kuhl said the Board is proud to be involved with the project.

“The Vin Smith Collection is a great asset to the Hall, and the work being carried out through the grants program from Arts Tasmania continues to cement the value of this collection and will build on its public appeal.

“The collection is one of very few in the world and this current curation will enhance the interpretation to ensure it becomes a must-see collection.”

In developing an interpretation plan for the collection, Council’s aim will be to tell the story of Vin Smith and the history of the items, their significance and contribution to early Tasmanian manufacturing techniques, and their linkages with present-day machines and tools.

“Vin Smith played an important role in preserving these machines and we look forward to capturing and sharing stories about Vin from the people who knew him,” Cr Enders said.

*This project is assisted through Arts Tasmania by the Minister for the Arts.*

**For more information: Mayor Bec Enders (03) 6264 0300**